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Extended essay cover

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: WLD. STUDIES CULT LANG IDENT

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: The teaching and learning of the English language in private and public schools of Ecuador between the 80's and today.

Candidate's declaration

This declaration must be signed by the candidate; otherwise a grade may not be issued.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

This is the final version of my extended essay.

Supervisor's report and declaration

The supervisor must complete this report, sign the declaration and then give the final version of the extended essay, with this cover attached, to the Diploma Programme coordinator.

Name of supervisor (CAPITAL letters)

Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

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I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.

I spent

5

 hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Criteria	Achievement level					
	Examiner 1	maximum	Examiner 2	maximum	Examiner 3	
A research question	<input type="text" value="1"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	
B introduction	<input type="text" value="1"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	
C investigation	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
D knowledge and understanding	<input type="text" value="1"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
E reasoned argument	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
F analysis and evaluation	<input type="text" value="1"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
G use of subject language	<input type="text" value="1"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
H conclusion	<input type="text" value="0"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	
I formal presentation	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
J abstract	<input type="text" value="0"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	
K holistic judgment	<input type="text" value="1"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	
Total out of 36	<input type="text" value="12"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	

Extended Essay

“The teaching and learning of English in Private and Public Schools of Ecuador between the 80’s and today”

May 2014

Student’s code:

Words: 3618

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Abstract

The following paper work encompasses all the important facts of a main social-academic problem that Ecuador has had to overcome through the past four decades. This problem is the lack of English language teaching in the Ecuadorian society in the 80's, focusing on Quito city. This work has been made inspired on the difficulty that Ecuadorian people that studied in the 80's in public schools, had to overcome when they wanted to find a job, or to improve on their careers. Nowadays people owe to have a high English level comprehension, in order for them to approach a better professional career level.

Because of that main problem, this work has taken into account the difference between how the English language was taught in public schools and private schools. During the following paper work, it will be showed the different characteristics of the teaching in both types of schools. As well as the important process of teaching and learning, and how the handling of this process affected the English learning level of the 80's public school students.

Through the centuries the human behavior has had the necessity to progress and develop its different skills among the society it belongs to, in other words, to improve its social relationships. It has been known that the best way to improve those relationships lies in the open knowledge of different languages (the more languages learned, the better). People who learn more than one language tend to have more intellectual, educational, personal, social and economical benefits than people who had only learned their native language through their life. But there is also a main importance that has to be recognized to the teaching of the languages, being that the correct teaching of a specific language is the first reason for the person to develop his or her skills correctly and also to seize them in every benefit previously mentioned. In that way, it is necessary to take in consideration the main educational issue that Ecuador has experienced through the past decades.

Since the 1960's the education in Ecuador has gone through different changes that have involved different ethnic groups, teachers and students to be part of a new progressive educational program (as called in that time) that intended to offer more tuition school opportunities for kids, and to encourage the growth of cultural, and mostly linguistic knowledge. However the political and the economical issue that Ecuador was experiencing those years (poverty rate increasing and massive migration phenomena) would not let this program develop as it should. Therefore, any predominant change through those years could not be noticed. The pedagogical and administrative reforms that occurred between 1980 and 1990 did not helped in any aspect to the improvement of the educational quality of Ecuador, they rather helped to increase the external debt and the weakening of the Ministry of Education.¹

The fact that in Ecuador did not exist any kind of change in the educational system through those years creates a main problem in one particularly subject that would have become extremely important years later in the students' career. Of course this subject is the English language, which was only taught one to two hours a week maximum in public schools in the 80's. In that class hour, the teacher's methodology would be limited by only showing the student a basic method and information about this language, this information includes: personal pronouns, common nouns, verb "to be" and sentence-formation. The

¹ According to the educational board of directors. *La educación ecuatoriana. (n.d.). La educación ecuatoriana. Retrieved November 9, 2013, from <http://www.filo.uba.ar/contenidos/carreras/edu>*

main issue consisted in the incomplete teaching of those aspects, which would not go further than what has been taught in class. The students had to learn all of the information by memory, which did not let them be able to create their own new sentences or dialogues, and as well make them forget what they just learned months earlier. There was also an absence of English dialogue in the class hours. This happened mainly because of the occasional mispronunciation of words from the teacher, which caused main confusion issue between the students. In public schools the rest of the subjects were given a better focusing rather than encouraging the bilingual student formation.

The presence of English language was rarely seen as predominance in Ecuador (specifically in Quito) but that does not mean that there did not exist any kind of English teaching or bilingual people in that time. There was a minority of private schools (which cost a lot) that prepared the students academically with English language since they first entered the school and through their development in the school. In that way only a very low percentage of the Ecuadorian population was able to pay those schools' tuition and have the opportunity to be well educationally prepared with the mentioned language. But as said before, the cost of this school tuition was extremely high and only the high social class or people who were relatives from someone that was part of the government could be able to be part of this kind of institutions and schools. Most of the population was part of the public educational system, which also included religious (catholic and Christian) institutions and schools.

For that reason it is important to see the main difference and create a comparison between what was mentioned before and the theoretical way of teaching-learning (the learning theory and the teaching theory that will be explained ahead).

Teaching can be defined as an interactive process, and also a system of actions which involves an agent, and end in view, and a two set of factors: the ones which the teacher has control to modify, like the order of aspects and main ideas of a certain topic; and the ones which the teacher has no control over with, like the size of the classroom, amount of students, etc.²

² According to B.O Smith and Edmund Amidon, *Psychologists*.

For instance it is necessary to fully understand what educational psychology means. “Educational Psychology is the application in the field of education with the aim of socializing man and modifying his behavior.”³ The study of this particularly area of psychology benefits the student greatly because it focuses on his or her needs, and mostly on his or her learning patterns. It has also a teaching-learning process, which is divided into important steps that ought to be followed strictly. For that reason, it is important to show and analyze closely each step of the teaching-learning process in this extended essay. These steps are based according to Teresa Banks, RN, Ph.D work.

PLAN

In which the specific content of the language is chosen in order to prioritize the student’s abilities. Therefore the teacher must establish objectives to improve the student’s learning experience.

According to Teresa Banks, RN Ph.D, the learning objectives that the teacher should establish state what the student is supposed to *know* within the cognitive domain of learning; what he/she is supposed to *do* within the psychomotor domain of learning and how the student or learner is supposed to *feel* within the affective domain of learning.

In the moment the teacher is choosing the content of the language he is about to teach, it is very important that the content is proper, actual, and that fits the student’s characteristics. In order for the learning process to ameliorate, the content that has been chosen should be the most interactive it can be.

The teacher’s strategies are an important part of this process, given that these are the ways the educator delivers the information and language knowledge. If these aren’t effective the student might have a misunderstanding in the content that was given in class, or acknowledge of it at all. These strategies often involve: a lecture, a group discussion, a simulation, mental imagery, demonstrations, gaming activities, printed materials, among

³According to Aggarwal J. C. (2004) Psychology of learning & development, Shipra Publishers, N. Delhi

others. In the language of English, conversational audio recordings are considered a helpful tool to improve the student's fluency when he or she's talking.

IMPLEMENTATION

For the teacher to be sure that all of the previous process mentioned before will work, it is important to set the environment correctly. Environment referred as the space in which the students will study. For example: the comfortableness of the tables and chairs, the functioning of the visual or audio equipment, among others. But the most important characteristic for the process to work efficiently depends on how much importance the teacher gives to the student's interests.

EVALUATION

In this part of the teaching-learning process is where all kinds of strategies show the results. According on those results, the teacher can consider in modifying his or her actual teaching activity and reflect it in future educational activities.

On the other hand, the evaluation of the student's learning reflects in his/ her psychomotor skills, affective and cognitive learning (as mentioned before). The cognitive learning refers to the student's results of the written tests; the result of his or her psychomotor skills refers to her or his performance in class between classmates; and the affective learning can be seen by the behavior of the student towards the class activities.⁴

In order to understand on full terms the role that students develop in the educational teaching-learning process, it is essential to comprehend what the Learning Theory refers to. Learning is a process in which a person is able to analyze, feel, think, perceive certain aspects and knowledge that is receiving from a source (teacher), it is also the change in the learner's behavior as a result of the process. As well as the teaching process mentioned before, the learning process has also some important steps that need to be showed in this essay, in order to comprehend in a better way the research topic of this essay. The information that this steps will show are based on certain interviews to teachers of private

⁴ According to Teresa Banks, RN Ph.D. (2000), Teaching and Learning Process, North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services, USA.

schools such as Colegio Británico, that preferred to stay anonymous; and its also based on certain websites that will be showed later on.

Learning, as a process, has its important principles that are highly recommended to follow. These are: readiness, exercise, effect, primacy, intensity and recency.⁵ Readiness consists in the student's main objectives and motives to be ready to learn (the student's internal preparation to learn). This is also the teacher's job, if students have a clear purpose to learn they will meet the teacher halfway in the teaching-learning process and it will not be difficult for them to get good results after the process. The minimum amount of external distractive aspects such as: worries, interests, responsibilities, unsolvable problems or the lack of motivation to learn, will not let the information given in the process be well accepted to the learner.

Exercise consists in drill and constant practice. The human mind tends to storage a certain amount of information, most of it not entirely complete and precise as it was seen the first time, for instance it is really important to repeat and also evaluate what was learned through exercises. In that way, the more the students' hear someone speaking in English and have the opportunity to not only study the theory of the language but speak it, the more they will know and the easier the teaching of English will get.

The Effect states that good results on the teaching and learning process also depend on the emotional reaction of the learner. If the teaching experience produces discomfort or confusion to the student, results won't be positive. For example, if the teacher impresses the student with texts that have complex vocabulary exercises, the student won't be able to develop his or her skills at their full potential and he or she will not advance into a better level comprehension of the language.

The Primacy consists in the first impression that a student gets of what he or she has learned. If what the student has learned has some mistake or it is not accurate, it will be very difficult to unteach it. For example, the bound between a very first class of English

⁵ According to *Learning Theory. (n.d.). The Learning Process. Retrieved November 16, 2013, from <http://www.dynamicflight.com/avcfibook/learning>*

pronunciation and how the student will read mentally and his way of talking is very strong to break.

Intensity depends on the personal way of teaching of the professor. An exciting learning experience will be more interesting and will be a fast attention catcher for the students. If the English education of the 80's is taking in consideration in this example, it should be mentioned that the English classes' intensity was fulfilled with routine teaching experiences, students got used to do the same and learn the same every day.

Recency takes into account how much time has passed after something has been taught. In other words, students remember more easily things that had just were taught. Information that students receive a large period of time ago can be partly forgotten, or can have certain difficulty to be demonstrated or applied in exercises (evaluations, tests, quizzes, etc)

There has been a long term discussion about different theories that wanted to define the Learning Theory and its components. But it had agreed that there are two basic approaches to the mentioned theory, being these: the cognitive theory and behaviorism.

The Cognitive theory consists in the psychological prosecute and formation of ideas in the student's mind. Learning it is not just a change of behavior, (as the behaviorism states) it is also a change in what are the student's thoughts, feelings, understandings and main ideas. This could also be interpreted as the main part of the teaching and learning process in which the student has the chance to develop his or her own ideology (according to the way he received classes).

Behaviorism assumes that the student's (learner) behavior depends on external stimuli which can be given by a positive or negative strengthening of those stimuli. Behaviorism suggests that it should be a positive strengthening, because otherwise there could not be good long term results to expect in the students' developing of English language.⁶ That is precisely the situation that students who received English language classes in the 80's had to experience. Behaviorism also controls learning experiences,

⁶ *Skinner, B. (n.d.). Behaviorism. Learning Theories RSS. Retrieved November 07, 2013, from <http://www.learning-theories.com/behaviorism.html>*

which helps students having a specific learning outcome. For example, learning how to elaborate a conversation (dialogue) with someone who has domain in the English language could be considered as a specific learning outcome, because in that way the student is learning how to talk and to start gaining fluency. That is one of the reasons why behaviorism is widely used today.

Based on the previously given information about the teaching and learning process, we can now see that one of the problems that English education in Ecuador had, was the lack of creativity in the teacher's strategies to give English language information. The class activities did not involve the student performance, the student was able to practice at home because he or she wasn't instructed how to do it. In some public schools in the 80's, the English subject did not have the same amount of evaluation points at the end of the school year like the rest of the subjects, meaning that the student could not make an effort in this subject and pass the year normally. That of course encouraged the students to pay attention to other subjects and leave English as an optional subject that won't mean the same as the rest of school subjects.

Therefore, as students got used to that particular but mistaken way of teaching in that time, it would later on grow into a social and cultural problem. When that generation of people wanted to apply for a job (in recent times) they did not have the opportunity to choose from a large source of different jobs and occupations, due to the specific requirements that those jobs had. Nowadays, every job has an English-speaking-expertise behest; some jobs require the employee to travel around some English-speaking countries.

For that reason some students from that generation had to adapt their working life avoiding the necessity to use the English language, but most of them had to find their way to reinforce the shallow amount of English they had learned. These persons had to choose from some options that involved language academic institutes that specialized on certain languages but mainly English; and also they had to travel and be part of some international exchanges in countries like England, U.S.A, France, Canada, among others.

On the other hand, it is necessary to expose how thorough the years Ecuador has experienced an educational change which it has been an outstanding difference and

improvement in the English language level, not also in teachers but mainly in students. Nowadays all students from public and private schools develop a considerably high level of English, making them automatically bilingual and capable of obtaining any kind of scholarships in foreign countries, and also a great chance and opportunities to obtain a job not only in Ecuador but also internationally. This happens mainly because of the English academic background teachers nowadays have. Some of English teachers have gone to college to prepare themselves academically to teach English, which creates a better understanding of the language to the students because of certain important aspects which involve a correct accent where students can learn from. This has been reinforced by Ecuador's Ministry of Education, this plan to improve the teaching of English in Ecuador was based in two main stages: evaluation and improvement. In the first stage, the Ministry of Education encouraged all English students from private and public schools to take the TOEFL exam⁷, in order to see the quality of English that has been taught during the years. After that stage, the Ministry of Education offered the SENECYT scholarships to future language teachers and also to teachers that wanted to have a master degree on their subject of teaching, these scholarships would let the teacher's have the opportunity to travel internationally and study in a well known college, in order for them to have more experience in the language and then return to Ecuador to apply their knowledge in Public Schools.⁸

The English language improvement seen today also happened because of the new teacher's scheme, where the student has a better participation in the teaching-learning process since the very first year of school. Which makes the student adapt to all of the language characteristics since his or her early years.

As it can be seen in the following graphs that have the results from the poll used to base this investigation, there are basic differences between people that studied English in the 80's that had to reinforce this language in other institutions; and people who did not had

⁷ Government, E. (n.d.). El Ministerio de Educación fortalece la enseñanza del inglés. Ministerios Coordinador de Conocimiento y Talento. Retrieved October 9, 2013, from <http://www.conocimiento.gob.ec/el-ministerio-de-educacion-fortalece-la-ensenanza-de-ingles/>

⁸ Gobierno Nacional Ofrece Becas "Enseña Inglés". (n.d.). Ministerio Coordinador de Conocimiento y Talento Humano. Retrieved October 10, 2013, from <http://www.conocimiento.gob.ec/gobierno-nacional-ofrece-becas-ensena-ingles/>

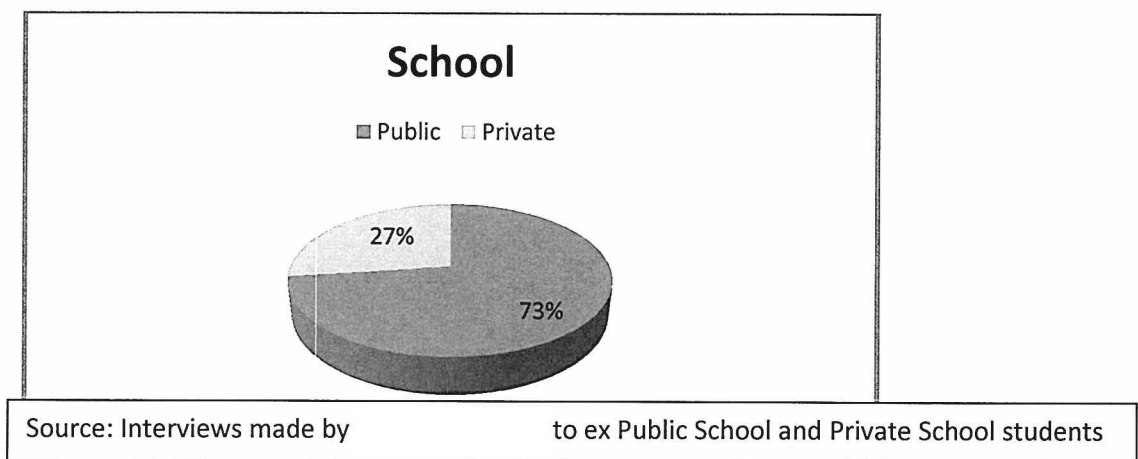
a chance to improve their level of English and had to work things out during their working life.

Finally, it is important to mention that there has been a highly improvement in the English teaching on recent times. This has to be considered an important cultural issue because it involves the Ecuadorian population-career-future, and it is always necessary to worry about our own country's educational problem, because we might not know if we can be able to help or contribute to its progress. As it can be shown in my work, I highlighted what it needs to be known, the correct process and steps that need to be followed in a future, in that way we can help improve the English language education more and more each day, and learn from the mistakes committed in the past.

Graph analysis of the interviews made

Graph #1

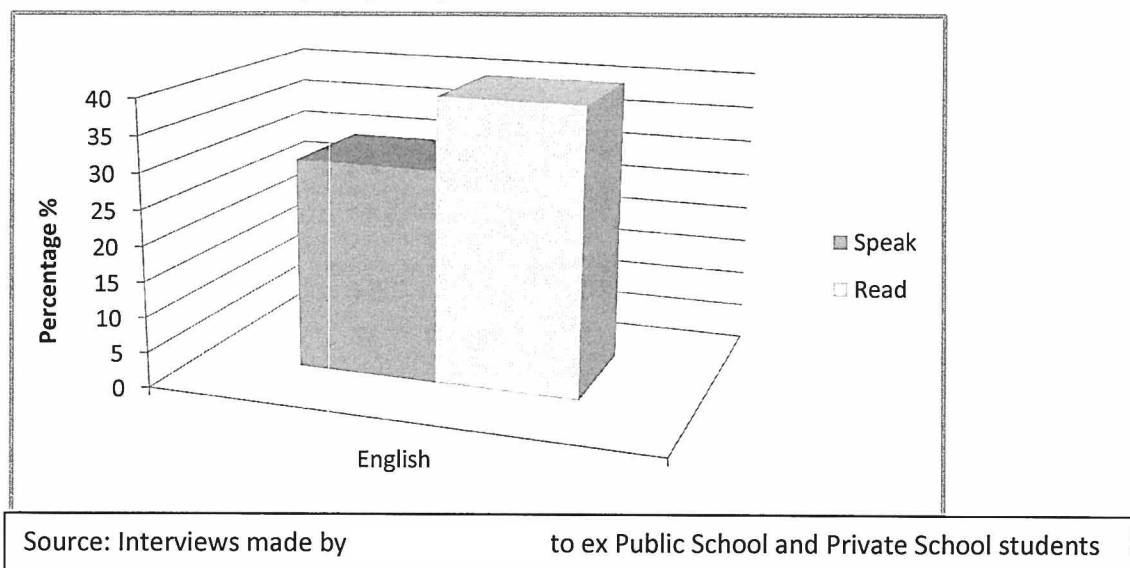
1) Did you study in a private or public schools?



As it can be noticed, there are more students that graduated in the 80's which belonged to Public schools. However, there is also a small percentage of students that studied in Private schools who did not have any significant problem in the language area.

Graph#2

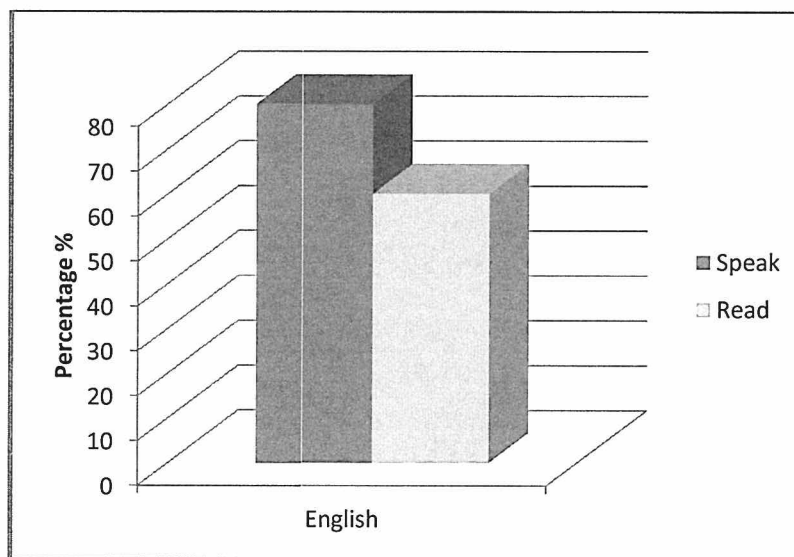
2) Percentage of English you speak or read.



This graph shows the poll results from students that studied English in public schools in the 80's.

Graph # 2.1

2) Percentage of English you speak or read.

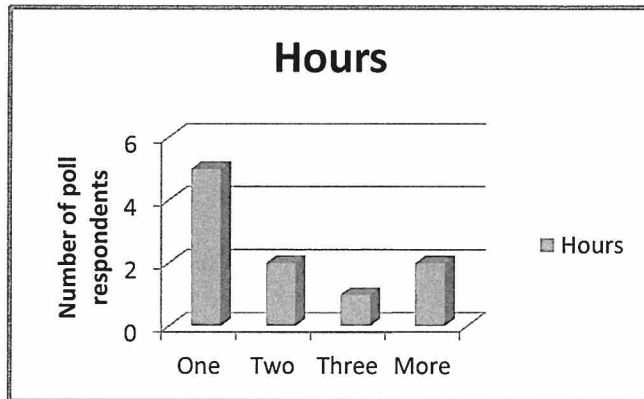


Source: Interviews made by _____ to ex Public School

The graph from above shows the poll results from students who had to learn English in specialized language institutions. Where it clearly shows how the level on spoken English has increased in comparison with the graph from students with their school English level.

Graph #3

3) How many hours a week did you attend English Class?



Source: Interviews made by _____ to ex Public School

As seen in the graph above, most of the respondents had only one hour a week of English when they were in school, which tells us that they studied in the 80's. On the other hand in the option of "More" hours there were answers of five and even ten hours a week, which tells us that those answers belong to students who graduated between 1990 and 2000.

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